

companies. Definitely, with such a constant increase in the number of users, its influence will only grow and spread.

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UDC:796.5:338,48:005.412 (479.24)

## **BALANCED ‘OPEN DOORS’ POLICY AS AZERBAIJANI TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ENGINE**

**Farida Guliyeva**, student

**Natalia G. Naumova**, Associate Professor, Language Consultant  
*Zaporizhzhia National University*

Azerbaijan is the dynamic developing country with its unique recreational resources and growing touristic potential. In 2004 the Ministry of Culture and Tourism designed a new logotype and slogan “Azerbaijan. European charm of the Orient. [2] That has been used by the government as the main tool to attract tourists all over the world. According to the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the number of tourists visiting increased by 20% in 2017, compared to 2016 [3].

Becoming a member of the World Tourism Organization, the state has begun implementing the programs “The Development of Tourism in 2002-2005 and 2010-2014” to establish legal nominative base in the sphere of tourism. [2] The next step that was made by the government included the problem of personnel training. Particularly, one of the most successful projects between United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Azerbaijan, which led to development of the Azerbaijan Tourism International (ATI) by providing special training courses to students and tourism sector employees. As to the country’s principal development concept, “Azerbaijan 2020: A look into the Future”. [1] As well as the previous projects, the main approach is to emphasize the strategic positions of the government to a global scale. Indeed, for investors, this opens wide opportunities, especially rapid progress of Azerbaijan infrastructure and services.

Azerbaijan is the country of contrasts, representing a new, ambitious and

progressive country, but still loyal to its roots and origins. The name of country is commonly associated with the “Land of fire”, since its worldwide known sources of eternal fire, called the “ateshgehs”. Besides, the “Flame Towers” complex in Baku has already become the hallmark of the city. Since its independence Azerbaijan has focused on event tourism including the Eurovision Song Contest 2012, FIFA’s U-17 Women’s World Cup, the first European Games in 2015 and, finally, Formula One Grand Prix, provided by the aim of popularization of national culture and its “introduction” to the modern world. It is also necessary to stress the importance of festivals holding in different regions of Azerbaijan: Novruz Bayram, International Mugham Festival and the extraordinary Pomegranate Festival in Goychay, that certainly deserves a second look.

Undoubtedly, equally essential is the role of construction of the modern infrastructure that has created a number of new possibilities. Azerbaijan, in the last decade, has built six international airports and added more than five thousand miles to its road network. [1] Additionally, the distinguished Heydar Aliyev International Airport and one of the biggest projects Baku-Tbilisi-Kars also known as “Iron Silk Road”.

Summarizing, it is necessary to underline that the policy of “Open Doors” carried out by the Azerbaijani government made the impulse for the development of tourism in Azerbaijan. This way has opened the opportunity for strong increase in the flow of tourists comparing to the previous years. These measures are supported by the state and are implemented in varied projects. The main factors in attracting foreign tourists are the elements of event tourism in the international scale, when Azerbaijan hosts at a decent level different kinds of sport, cultural and economic events. So, as it has been mentioned above Azerbaijan is “the West in the East and the East in the West” with its fast impressive transformation and dynamic infrastructure.

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